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Possibilities of Polyphonic Treatment of Chinese Tunes

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Thesis
POSSIBILITIES OF POLYPHONIC TREATMENT OF
CHINESE TUNES

by
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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

WHY CHINESE MUSIC HAS NOT DEVELOPED POLYPHONICALLY

As far as present investigations show, Chinese music has always been a purely melodic system with no sign of polyphonic or harmonic usage. Part singing such as westerners know and enjoy has never been an element in Chinese life. Only one instrument - the 'sheng' or the Chinese 'Pipes of Pan' has ever consistently used two tones simultaneously. This interesting little instrument invariably plays perfect fourths and fifths in parallel motion. Such music is called 'organum' and has been known in the west for a comparatively few centuries whereas the Chinese have been playing this instrument in this way for perhaps many milleniums.

It is strange that no more complexity of tone relationships ever developed in China than organum. However, when one considers the geographical isolation of this vast country, it is more easily comprehended why it is that her music, in general, has not changed for these thousands of years. On the west of China are the highest mountains in the world - no human being has ever been able to scale these lofty heights. On the east of China the largest ocean in the world has served as a barrier for many centuries. On the north are the vast Siberian deserts where habitation is almost impossible. On the south are still vaster stretches of water. Thus has China been removed
from the streams of occidental currents of culture.

Our western music is a product of the constant interchange of ideas around the Mediterranean Sea. Western civilization in general, is a composite of all the cultures which have flourished around this great inland sea. China's culture is more the product of her own intellectual and spiritual life than that of any other great country on earth.

Confucius, the one character in all history who has influenced China more than any other single person, taught that there should be no free social mingling among the sexes. Boys and girls who had reached the age of seven were to be kept apart. The result of this principle of separation did not foster a life where music functioned as a social art. Parents chose the life companions for their children, so that songs of wooing, so very abundant in the west, were never necessary in the life of the youth of China. Bound feet of women for nearly a thousand years made social dancing impossible. During these same centuries, Europe developed folk dancing and developed therewith a great variety of rhythmic forms which have served to inspire and assist the great composers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in their creative works.
Chapter II
WESTERN METHODS OF MUSIC TREATMENT CREATE PROBLEMS WHEN APPLIED TO CHINA'S PURE MELODY

One of the ways in which occidental life has affected China's ancient culture is evidenced by a desire among young Chinese musicians to treat Chinese tunes with harmony or polyphony. This desire has arisen due to the fact that in some instances missionaries have brought into China the best of western music and have presented it to the youth of China as the flower of European culture. In other instances students from China have gone to western countries and have observed for themselves the structure of occidental music. On their return to China they have desired to create a new kind of music in China based on those principles of treatment which they have seen in operation in the west.

When treated with harmony however, Chinese tunes seem to lose their identity while polyphonic treatment leaves the original melody more free. Polyphonic writing is not so accessible for Chinese students since its technique is more subtle and demands more training. Specialized training in music has not been afforded to Chinese students in any adequate measure and even in a few instances where students have gone to western countries they have not seemed to grasp the principles of polyphonic writing. Two instances may be cited to indicate these observations:
1. Mr. Jen Kuang, after studying for twelve years in France returned to China to assume the position of chief of the music reproducing section of the Columbia-Pathe Company in Shanghai. He attempts to write harmonic accompaniments for the Cantonese songs which he has known from his youth. His desire is to 'dress up' these tunes in western clothes and thus make them more presentable for the cinema for which they are prepared. In conversation with him, it became evident that he is greatly dissatisfied with such a use of Chinese tunes but he hasn't the courage to experiment with a polyphonic accompaniment to these same tunes.

2. Mr. Hsu Yung-san has been raised in a very wealthy family in Peking. He is now a sophomore in Yenching University, Peking and is concentrating on the study of music. He has fine native ability and has experimented in many of the western forms of music but has a major interest in the use of Chinese tunes as the basis for his experiments. His knowledge of western music has been secured by means of listening to phonographic recordings of the masterpieces of western music. He wants to deal with Chinese tunes polyphonically but has not the technical ability.

Other instances of just such experiments might very easily be cited. These two instances and others show that there is a sense of dissatisfaction among those experimenting with China's melodies in that they all feel that a harmonic background is not the most adequate one. Polyphony and free treatment in
melodic accompaniment seems to be the only satisfactory solution to this problem.

This thesis is concerned then with an experiment in the polyphonic treatment of a few representative tunes in a way which may prove of value to those in China who are laboring with the same problem. The tunes themselves should not suffer any change whatsoever but should by means of melodic treatment become more interesting and at the same time meet a demand among a certain group of ambitious musicians in colleges and departments of music in China. If this aim is accomplished, then the experiment will have justified itself.
Chapter III
WHAT TYPES OF CHINESE MELODIES
LEND THEMSELVES TO POLYPHONIC
TREATMENT.

Folk songs have been the raw material for the creation of music ever since the beginnings of the art. China abounds in folk melodies for the Chinese people sing at their work, they sing when unemployed for recreation (not in groups however) and they sing in their ceremonials. Operatic melodies are the property of the proletariat as well as the cultured. The streets of the cities like Peking are full of sound.

Folk songs are generally simple in structure and of a limited tonal range but appealing. The Chinese folk songs seem to satisfy a very large sector of the human family and must therefore be of high quality. Most of them have never been committed to paper.

Operatic arias are very florid and melismatic and consequently not suitable for polyphonic treatment. But there is one kind of intellectual music which is suitable for this kind of thesis namely: the verse tune. Verse tunes have been known in the west also; they have come out of the ancient life of the past and have been lost for posterity.

The ancient Greeks, according to historic records now available, did chant their verses but the
tune did not evolve from the words themselves as in China. Here we have a type of language which depends for its meaning on the inflection of the word sounds themselves. Vocally speaking, it is impossible to transfer ideas in China without the use of inflections in the voice itself. This principle is not known in any other great civilization in the whole world and is therefore utterly foreign to the occident.

In the Peiping area there are four definitely recognized inflections for every word sound. The further south one goes the more inflections are used so that in the southern dialects it is possible to find as many as twelve inflections.

China's great poets have come for the most part, from Central China where there are six tones or inflections. When poets compose a certain kind of poetry called 'tzu' they must take into account not only the word rhyme but also these word inflections thereby complicating poetic composition to an amazing extent. This kind of poetry originated in the Musical Academy of the T'ang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.). The art of composition of this kind of poetry has suffered during the past few decades.

If these poems (tzu) are recited aloud with particular emphasis on the inflections it will serve to bring into prominence a tune or a melody which is inherent in the words themselves. Such a tune is called a verse tune. There are hundreds and hundreds of these tunes each one having a very particular name. The names may have come from the first line of the poems which set the standard or they may have come from
some other source not known to present scholars. Their poetic
nature and their simplicity make them good subjects for
polyphonic treatment.

In the instrumental field we find tunes which are more
or less vocal in nature for instrumental music in China has
not yet developed beyond that of the instrumental music of
Europe in the fifteenth century. At that time in Europe,
instruments were largely used to accompany voices. The same is
t rue in China today with a few notable exceptions such as the
seven-stringed lute(ku ch'in), the two-stringed violin(erh-hu),
the guitar(p'i-p'a) and the oboe and perhaps the flute. Among
the melodies played on instruments only, there are certain tunes
which are simple, naïve and folksong-like. Such melodies are
good material for polyphonic treatment.

Thus we are using in this thesis such tunes as will
readily adapt themselves for polyphonic treatment. Such tunes
are folk song melodies, verse tunes and selected instrumental
melodies.
Chapter IV
A RESUME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS
of
CHINESE MELODIES

China's folk songs share with other folk songs of the human race in exhibiting certain general characteristics which may be briefly mentioned:

a. The simplest expressions have a melodic range of about a fourth or a fifth. Street cries and work songs often exemplify this characteristic. An example of a street cry and then a work song follows:

Street Cry:

Work Song:

b. Folk songs are generally unaccompanied but if accompanied, the instrument plays with the voice part without any variations.

In addition to the above mentioned characteristics of the simplest folk songs there are certain other specific traits found in Chinese folk tunes which may be mentioned as follows:

a. The penta-tonic series or scale is very widely
employed in Chinese there are many instances of the use of the seven-toned scale. The employment of this latter series is not the same as the west for when the half tones come they occur only in descending motion and never in an ascending diatonic series. There are frequent examples of skipping to a half tone but never does one find a 'mi to fa' or a 'ti-do' melodic progression. Examples of 'fa-mi' and also 'do-ti' successions may be found, however.

b. Melodic skips of a major seventh or a major ninth are not infrequent but rather characteristic. These skips are due, it is thought, to the lack of definiteness in Chinese notes. In some dynasties, the notation was so inaccurate that no representation of a tone an octave higher or lower than the medium range of a given melody was indicated. The result was that in order to obtain more freedom and variety, skipping to a major ninth instead of progressing to the second was used; instead of the major second, there would be skipping to the seventh instead.

c. Without a 'leading tone to tonic' progression, cadences invariably use the flattened seventh thereby giving an effect found in Plain Chant of the early Christian Church.

d. The use of organum in connection with the 'sheng' has been mentioned. This interesting instrument has a small range of about thirteen tones so that in playing upon it, the necessity of turning back upon the tones seems to be imperative. Thus it consistently uses consecutive
fourths and fifths in keeping with the demands of the range of the tune itself. Consequently such intervals are familiar and delightful to the Chinese ear.

e. There is a complete absence of triple rhythm in the folk music of China and an exclusive use of duple rhythm. Music reflects the fundamental philosophy of the Chinese as expressed in 'light and shadow' (yang and yin), sun and moon, the ideal of perfect duality—the ultimate in balance and proportion. Consonant with this attitude towards all things, music should have only duality of rhythmic emphasis. Only in the chanting of verse can there be found any trace of triple rhythm.

f. Irregular phrasing is a usual occurrence since the measured emphasis which polyphony and folk dancing in Europe brought into prominence never entered Chinese life. No time signatures nor measure bars were ever necessary. On the other hand, the phrase is the unit of expression and its duration has been indicated by bars.

g. The use of the natural scale instead of the tempered scale in China has caused some ignorant westerners to declare that Chinese music is 'out of tune'. For this reason these tunes can be only approximately represented on the piano but can be better reproduced on orchestral instruments or sung. No key-board instruments have ever been used by the Chinese because their use precludes a rigid type of tuning thereby eliminating the freedom of adjustment between tones. The piano has therefore, been used very sparingly in this thesis.
Chapter V
METHODS OF PROCURING AND TREATING
of the
ORIGINAL MATERIAL

The writer of this thesis has lived eleven years of his life in the ancient city of Peking (now called Peiping), China. For nearly a thousand years, it has been a capital of China thus bringing to it the richest and best that the citizens of the land could produce. The many palaces, museums, temples, and institutions of learning which are found here are witnesses to the fact that cultural life of a high order can be found within its antiquated walls.

For one whole year, five hours a day and five days a week for about fifty weeks the language was carefully studied in the North China Union Language School. The study of the language does not cease with this period of concentration for no living soul has ever fathomed the depths of this great expression of Chinese life. But even a small knowledge does help one to interpret the artistic expressions of the people and enable one to obtain materials for study by means of first hand contacts.

In 1923, the writer went to Peking as a teacher of music in Yenching University. This institution has become the leading university among all the schools and colleges of higher education in China. Besides the assistance which other
American schools give her, Harvard University cooperates with Yenching University in the administration of a large fund the purpose of which is to provide means for the study of Chinese culture and civilization from the most ancient times. This organization is know as the 'Harvard-Yenching Institute' and it employs scholars from all over the world who are interested and equipped in researching in this field. Particularly does it enrich the department of Chinese studies in the curriculum of Yenching University. It has tended to make every member of the faculty there interested in relating his field of study to China and her contributions in that particular field. Music has recently been added to the list of those elements of Chinese culture which the Institute intends to investigate. It is the stimulation of such an organization and the general musical atmosphere of Peking which has made this thesis possible.

Excepting organum, Chinese music in its native form uses no harmony or counterpoint of any kind. (In opera, one often hears the Chinese violin playing a free counterpoint against the melody but it is an improvisation and not in accordance with any accepted standards.

As far as is known, no treatise of this kind has ever been prepared so that comparisons with existing materials are not available. Inasmuch as this thesis is an experiment in the polyphonic treatment of Chinese material, the writer has been compelled to rely upon western technique of composition in this
style. No particular school or period of polyphonic writing has been adhered to but each melody has been treated as the spirit and content of each one seemed to suggest.

Mention might be made of the polyphonic treatment used in general reserving a more particular and detailed explanation of each melody and its treatment below.

Three tunes: 'Hsiao K'ai Men', 'Yang Kuan San Tieh', and 'Chieh Tiao' come from emotions of sadness. They are very suggestive of Gregorian Plain Chant in the structure and spirit. An attempt has been made to use polyphony of a modal nature with combinations of tune of a modern type. The original melodies have thereby been kept intact and their native spirit enhanced.

The folk song 'Yu Weng Leh T'ao Jan' lent itself to the use of canon at the octave below and also to organum accompanied by the melody in diminution and inversion.

The folk tune 'Su Wu Mu Yang' represents the spontaneous cheer of the Chinese people. It sounds like a western melody although it is widely known and sung in China. In keeping with its structure and spirit, two contrapuntal lines have been added which are consonant with the cantus firmus and lively in nature.

'Lang T'sao Sha' is a poetic tune in the major mode; the two polyphonic lines which have been added are imitative both as to the content of the melody and its rhythm.
The background and the method of treatment of each tune used in the thesis is hereby given in the following order:

Hsiao K'ai Men
Lang T'ao Sha
Yang Kuan San Tieh
Su Wu Mu Yang
Yü 'Weng Leh T'ao Jan
Chieh Tiao

Hsiao K'AI MEN (The Door Ajar) 小開門

is a tune played on a Chinese oboe for funeral ceremonies. The tone quality of the Chinese oboe is very similar to that of the European type with perhaps a tendency to be more strident. As to the name of the tune, there are many different kinds of melodies which bear the same name. The title signifies the opening music in a ceremony whether it be a funeral or a wedding—a kind of prelude. Each community has its own traditional melodies for these occasions. This melody had never been written down before the writer did so several years ago. It is only an approximation of the tune as it is played since there are copious grace notes scattered among the more important ones—notes which are very difficult to adequately represent.

The person who sang the melody to the writer as he wrote it down on paper was a student of Yenching University.
He has artistic abilities and was studying both art and music at the time. His major interest was in geology and since his graduation he has become a regular member of the staff of the National Geological Survey of China. He has always been a keen observer of his environment; this trait has been no small factor in contributing to his success. He spent his boyhood in a small village one hundred miles east of Peking at a place called Yü-t’ien. His own name is Li Lien-chieh. It was from the singing of this tune that the transcription took place.

This tune originally came from a Chinese oboe, an instrument which in principle is identical with a modern orchestral oboe of the west. It has no keys but the reed is double but made in a different manner from the French oboe reeds. In the latter case, they are made by binding together two separate pieces of reed whereas the Chinese reed is simply a cross section of a native swamp reed crudely and naively adjusted to the brass contrivance which covers the end of the wooden pipe. There are eight holes in the pipe which when stopped by the fingers give the pitch. The tone quality is shrill, whiny, and melancholy and of high pitch.

The melody in the polyphonic treatment has been given to the English horn since its tone more nearly approximates in melancholy spirit the Chinese original. The violin has been employed to play the counterpoint in the first section. In the second section, a second violin part has been added. The material for the second part has been secured by doubling the speed of the original melody, making adjustments at times.
HSIAO K'AI MEN
小開門
Part II

Violin

Melody in Cor Anglais

范天祥
LANG T'AO SHA (Wave-swept Sands)

This melody is one of the verse tunes associated with the tzu (described above). It was secured by first hand transcription to paper from the singing of Mr. Li Pao-chen, a graduate of Yenching University who, when he was a student took all the courses in music which were offered by the university at that time. His thesis consisted of a course of study for Chinese high school students in the appreciation of western music—the first of its kind to have been written. After his graduation he developed a notable department of music in one of the large high schools for boys in Peking (Yu Ying) and organized large choirs of boys. His work has had national recognition. In addition to this work he prepared several volumes of songs in Chinese translated from western sources which would be suitable for Chinese boys. With this material made available to other schools, they have all been greatly profited by his contributions to the cause of music education. Just at present he is a student in the Conservatory of Music in Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio.

This tune is a setting of a poem about the San Kuo (The Three Kingdoms) A.D. 221-265 and was written by a poet, Tung P'u who lived in the Sung Dynasty, A.D. 960-1127. Its range is rather unusually large (an octave and a half). It contains a characteristic interval—the major ninth. The phrases have a singular unity with a kind of recapitulation of the initial idea in the last section.
In the polyphonic treatment, the tune has been assigned to the viola. Its rich, deep, tones carry the suggestion of a tenor singer, most likely the approximate pitch of the voice as it recites or reads the poetry. The violin and the violoncello supply the contrapuntal portions both above and below the cantus firmus. The polyphony is based almost exclusively on melodic fragments found in the melody itself.

The melody is a demonstration of the wide range possible in the inflection of the voice in reading Chinese words. Many other very beautiful verse tunes are available. There are volumes of them which every true poetic scholar must have for reference and use.
LANG T'AO SHA
浪淘沙
Yang Kuan San Tieh (The Three Ceremonies of the Yang Pass). This tune is of purely instrumental origin. Its name is difficult to translate especially the word 'tieh'. Literally it means a fold or a doubling over on to itself of some material or thing. In order to understand this melody it is necessary to relate concerning the early situation in China.

The only trade route which China used to have with the west was one which went through the mountains on the west. At one place in the mountains where passage through could be secured there was a village called the Yang Kuan. Yang is a surname and 'kuan' means a mountain pass. If two dear friends were to be parted, the departing one was accompanied to the Yang Kuan and as he left his native country, his friend would play this tune on the lute. It is therefore a parting song.

The instrument on which it was played is called a seven-stringed or ancient lute (ku ch'in). The history of the lute is as ancient as the history of China. Originally it consisted of a single string but about three thousand years ago it assumed the form in which it is today. Its seven strings are tuned as if the tones were do, re, mi, sol, la (the penta-tonic scale), the two remaining strings are octave duplications below of the upper sol, la strings. The strings are made of silk and they are tuned loosely so that the pitch is low. The wood of the lute is from the paint tree. Carvings inside each instrument give the name of the maker, the serial number of each instrument and the date of production.
It is the instrument that scholars of ancient times were required to learn before they could receive the highest official place in society. The five other requirements were: painting, archery, astronomy, calligraphy, and charioteering. Music was the one element which united the heavens and the earth. The very shape of the lute indicated this union for the bottom is flat and the top is round and the music which emerges from its vibrating strings in the unifying element.

The physiological characteristics of a Chinese scholar in the form of long finger nails are necessary to play this highly intellectualized instrument for the strings are plucked by the nails of the right hand and are stopped by the nails of the left hand.

Tunes for this instrument are carefully wrought, intellectually conceived and deeply emotional in character. They are the finest expressions in tone of Chinese life.

The information concerning the instrument and the tune were given by a Mr. Yang Yin-liu who is at present on the staff of the Harvard-Yenching Institute at Yenching University. His research is confined solely to Chinese music. As a young man he spent four years under the private tutorship of a great Chinese musician in Wusih, Central China. He published two books of instrumental music. Then he came as a student of European music to Yenching University where he studied for two years. His former training in the music of his own land was a great help in a quick comprehension of western music.
In the polyphonic treatment of this ancient melody it has been difficult to find an instrument which could adequately represent the original ideal in tone color for the cantus firmus. Of all the instruments used in the west, the violoncello produces the tone nearest in quality to the lute but it is essentially a bowed and not a plucked instrument. Because of the longer lute strings, the duration of tone on the open strings is not so great on the 'cello; and the lute is played with as many open strings as possible. For this reason the melody is produced on the lowest register of the 'cello pizzicatto and duplicated an octave higher in the lowest register of the viola but with a soft bowed tone. The two tones together may thus reproduce with some accuracy the long, low, continuing tone of the plucked lute string. The oboe plays a counterpoint based on melodic intervals as found in the original melody. The piano part gives both a percussive effect and a harmonic background.

In the second section, the original melody is assigned to the oboe as an instrument with a sad tone while the viola duplicates the melody as in the first section. The 'cello plays a counterpoint similar to that which the oboe played in the first part.
阳关三叠
Part II

Melody

Oboe

Viola

Cello

Piano
This is a very widely known folk song but it has several sets of words. The tune is always the same however (except for slight variations characteristic of folk music) with the same name. It can be heard sung or played on the flute or violin on the streets of Peking every day so that it needs no one to give it introduction.

Su Wu was an envoy of the Han Dynasty, 226 B.C. to 25 A.D. and was sent on state business to Mongolia. His home was in South China where the climate and living conditions are quite different from the conditions in Mongolia. On arriving at his destination, he was taken into captivity and was held for nineteen years. His life was very bitter for he had to tend sheep in all kinds of weather. This kind of employment was particularly obnoxious for a southerner does not like sheep. The original words of the song tell the story of his life in captivity.

The words which are generally heard among the folk of Peking have to do with a baby girl who is less than a year old. Even though a girl, she is the pride and joy of all the family. No more charming song in all folk literature can be found than this cheerful, lilting melody of China. It is so typically Chinese that some mention should be made of the cheer which is inherent in the most widely used folk songs of the people. Many people err greatly in thinking that the Chinese express themselves in sad music. With the exception of temple music,
some mournful music for sad occasions, and a few modal touches in her songs, the folk music of China is joyful. The attitude of the common people towards their existence is such as to make them happy. Mencius, who lived 400 years B.C. and who was the greatest disciple of Confucius, taught that men are born into the world with good natures and therefore they should be happy and content. This philosophy of contentment and goodness is largely responsible for the major mood of the folk songs. It is also responsible for the eternal love of peace found among the people. On the other hand, it has made people too content with their environment so that economically they are not what they should be.

In the west, the teaching that all men are born evil and must therefore be regenerated has made our attitude war-like and our finest musical expressions full of struggle. Such masterpieces of the west as Bach's B Minor Mass, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and Brahms First Symphony are classic examples of this principle and philosophy of struggle.

In the polyphonic treatment of this joyful tune there has been an attempt made to keep the same spirit in the supporting counterpoint. The melody itself is played by the A clarinet with a fast moving flute part above and a slower but none the less happy clarinet part below the cantus firmus.

A translation of the two best known sets of words by Miss Grace Boynton, professor of English in Yenching University follows:
SU WU TENDS SHEEP

Su Wu
He a captive stays
In Mongolia
In the ice and snow.
Nineteen years, many days,
Have not brought him low.
Thirsty he drinks snow,
Hungry he eats wool.
There he watches sheep-
His proud heart is full.
For the Han he wearies ever, he
In captivity.

BABY SISTER

Our house
Has a fat baby.
Not one year is she-
Cute as she can be.
Can't eat rice, drinks no tea,
Nurses greedily.
Wears a little cap,
Coat is pink to see;
Wakes up from her nap
Like a flower she.
Grandpa, grandma, father, mother
Love her foolishly.
SU WU MU YANG

蘇武牧羊
The Happy Fisherman

This folk song comes from the southern part of China where fishing is a great occupation of the people. Southern Chinese use fish as a major element in their diet. But in spite of its southern origin, it is widely known in the north and can be heard sung or played on the streets, in country and hamlet.

The words tell of the ordinary routine of a fisherman and of the happiness which this simple life brings to him. The soul of China is revealed here in a direct and powerful way. A man can be happy, supremely so, in doing the most mundane business for he has learned to be content with a little. The strength of the Chinese race is epitomized in this little song.

The music is a perfected folk song with variety and with unity. The recapitulation of the first phrase both in the words and music gives the song peculiar unity and emphasis. The exquisite phrasing in balance and proportion together with the other characteristics named show that the Chinese and the west belong to the same human family for folk songs the world around do have unity. Confucius famous saying: "All within the four seas are brothers" has been proven again and again.

In the polyphonic treatment, the piano has been used as the only medium of expression. An experiment in canon and in counterpoint in diminution and inversion has been tried.
The first section uses canon at the octave below-strict canonic imitation. A few notes were elongated in order to make the canon more effective but otherwise the melody was not changed in the least. In the second section, only half of the original melody was used in the upper part as a cantus firmus. The first part of the counterpoint is a composed melody in the style of the original tune. The second part of the counterpoint is a portion of the original melody at diminution. The third section consists of the same material as was used in the second section but with the bass melody in the soprano and the soprano part put into the bass.

The use of organum in the second and third sections gives an added touch of oriental color adding interest and climax. Such a use of polyphony does not destroy the original melody nor the original spirit of the melody but does point the way to a use of tone with tone.

The translation of the words by Miss Grace Boynton of Yenching University follows:
THE HAPPY FISHERMAN

Happy is the fisherman:
Rows his boat,
Wearing his grass coat,
Holds his fishing rod
Standing in his little skiff.

Now his basket fish-filled-
Golden carp leap pair by pair;
River waves are like dragon scales,
Misty are the willows;
Happy is the man's song,
As the sun goes down.

Then to town to sell the fish-
Wine he buys,
Carp he fries
Well for his evening meal.

When night comes,
Makes him a bed
'Mong the reeds.
Then he sings a drowsy song.
Bright moonlight falls on the skiff.
Happy is the fisherman.
PART II
CHIEH TIAO (Song of Consolation)

This tune comes from the funeral rites of the deceased as performed by Buddhist and Taoist priests in a district of the province of Hopei, North China called Ting Hsien. There are seven days of mourning before the burial and one of the days is called 'Chieh Tiao'. The spirit of the melody is distinctly in the mood of wistful consolation.

A Mr. Jen Chih-jung, a graduate of Yenching University is now in Ting Hsien as a professional musician on the staff of the Mass Educational Movement which is an organization organized and directed by Mr. James Yen. The ideal of the movement is to improve the life of China's peasant class by first giving them a knowledge of one thousand most commonly used characters. With the aid of this much education they are introduced to all types of reading which will make them better citizens in every way. The power of music as a socializing and educational factor in life is fully realized.

It is Mr. Jen's task to collect folk tunes of all kinds and to fit them into some program of betterment for the people. It was for this purpose that this tune was written down and while on a visit to this place in 1934 he gave me a book of tunes he had collected.

The melody has several characteristics which would identify it as Chinese. The use of the seven-tone scale is here exemplified in true Chinese fashion. In every instance
of the use of the half tone, it is always in a descending
diatonic series. The skip of a major seventh followed by a
skip of a minor third is also here seen. The flattened seventh
in the final cadence giving a modal effect as if in the Dorian
mode. The phrases are irregular in length.

In the polyphonic treatment, the oboe sings the sad and
plaintive melody since its tone is best suited for such tunes
and since it originated on a primitive type of oboe.
The string quartette accompanies the oboe; in the counterpoint
an effort was made to include the ideas of the melody. However,
it was necessary in the harmonic treatment to use intervals
of a non-Chinese type such as the 'mi-fa' progression.
Part I

Melody in Oboe

Violin

Viola
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

A strictly melodic type of music as found in China's past, is gradually changing due to the penetration of European ideas and methods which are harmonic and polyphonic. Most of the experimenters among the Chinese have used harmonic means of developing melodies but such a treatment tends to destroy the essential spontaneity of these tunes. A polyphonic treatment should better preserve the melodic freedom and at the same time add interest and even enhance the original expression.

If China should follow the steps in the development of her melodies which Europe used she would first employ organum (which she has actually done in the case of the music for the 'sheng'), then fauxbourdon and then various kinds of polyphony and counterpoint. Through the means of these agencies she might evolve a new kind of harmony rather than follow the old methods of Europe.

The tunes most easily treated polyphonically are folk songs, simple verse tunes and instrumental solos. The folk songs thus treated in this thesis are:
Su Wu Mu Yang, Yu Weng Leh T'ao Jan. The verse tune used is:
Lang T'ao Sha. In the instrumental field one lute tune:
Yang Kuan San Tich and two oboe melodies: Hsiao K'ai Men and
Chieh Tiao were used.

Various polyphonic means of developing these tunes have been used with the attempt to employ in the counterpoint, the characteristics of Chinese melodies in general and certain melodic fragments of each tune in particular. Orchestral instruments have been used as the medium of expression (except in Yu Weng Leh T'ao Jan) since they allow for more flexibility of tonal relationships thus more nearly approaching the true Chinese tonality with its natural, non-tempered scale.

Chinese youth, interested in the problem of how to develop Chinese tunes without the destruction of the uniqueness of the melody itself may be stimulated to experiment more in the polyphonic field and less in the harmonic.